

REMARKS

The applicants have carefully considered the Office action dated November 16, 2005, and the references it cites. By way of this Response, claims 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 19 and 20 have been amended, and claims 1, 6 and 8 have been cancelled without prejudice to their further prosecution. In view of the following, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Office action identified various antecedent basis issues with respect to claims 1, 10, 11, and 19. The Office action also identified typographical errors in claims 2 and 10. The claims have been amended to address these informalities. Therefore, the objections to the claims and the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejections have been overcome. Applicants note that the amendments made to address these informalities are not narrowing and, thus, do not do not give rise to prosecution history estoppel or limit the scope of equivalents of the claims under the doctrine of equivalents.

The Office action indicated that claims 10-20 would be allowed if amended to overcome the above-noted informalities. Since the informalities have been corrected, as noted in the Office action, claims 10-20 are in condition for allowance.

The Office action also indicated that claims 2-5, 7, and 9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In accordance with this suggestion, objected-to claims 2, 7 and 9 have been rewritten in independent form. Therefore, as indicated in the Office action, claims 2, 7 and 9 and all claims depending therefrom are in condition for

U.S. Serial No. 10/807,667

Response to Office Action Dated November 16, 2005

allowance. Again, the applicants note that rewriting the objected-to claims in independent form does not narrow the scope of those claims and, thus, does not give rise to prosecution history estoppel or limit the scope of equivalents of the claims under the doctrine of equivalent

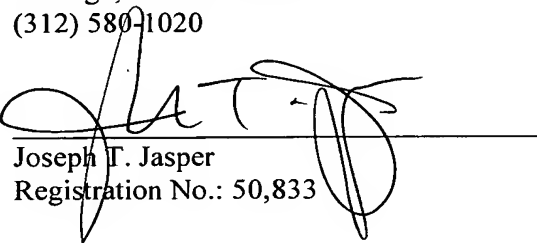
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner is of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number identified below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: February 15, 2006 By:



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